

REMARKS

This paper is submitted in response to the pending Office Action mailed on May 11, 2006. Claims 16-27 are pending and Claims 16, 18-23 and 25-27 are amended. No new matter is introduced by these amendments. A Request for Continued Examination is submitted herewith. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account 02-1818 for any fees which are due and owing.

The Office Action rejected all claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph and objected to Claim 25. Applicants respectfully disagree, and submit that the claims as presently amended overcome these rejections. For at least this reason, it is respectfully requested that these rejections be withdrawn.

The Office Action objected to the title of the invention as not being descriptive. Applicants respectfully disagree; however, to advance prosecution, Applicants have amended the title and respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejected all of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,734,568 ("Watanabe I") and/or U.S. Patent No. 4,849,614 ("Watanabe II"). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Watanabe I discloses an IC card that includes a memory area in which the record length and number of records is retained as index information. However, it is respectfully submitted that Watanabe I does not disclose or suggest a plurality of area definition blocks each of which stores information relating to a predetermined area in the second area which is used by one or more provider apparatuses and access right data for one of the plurality of provider apparatuses associated with the area definition block which defines access rights to the predetermined area, wherein the area definition blocks define the information and the access rights data so that the predetermined area of the second area associated with the provider apparatus can be accessed by another provider apparatus.

For at least this reason, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 16 and Claims 17-20, which depend from Claim 16, are each patentably distinguished from Watanabe I and are in condition for allowance. For similar reasons, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 21-27 are each patentably distinguished from Watanabe I and are in condition for allowance.

Similarly, Watanabe II discloses a composite IC card that includes storage area in which predesignated bytes (i.e., the 6th and 7th bytes, respectively) identify the record length and number of records available in the storage area; however, it is respectfully submitted that Watanabe II does not disclose or suggest a plurality of area definition blocks each of which stores information relating to a predetermined area in the second area which is used by one or more provider apparatuses and access right data for one of the plurality of provider apparatuses associated with the area definition block which defines access rights to the predetermined area, wherein the area definition blocks define the information and the access rights data so that the predetermined area of the second area associated with the provider apparatus can be accessed by another provider apparatus.

For at least this reason, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 16 and Claims 17-20, which depend from Claim 16, are each patentably distinguished from Watanabe II and are in condition for allowance. For similar reasons, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 21-27 are each patentably distinguished from Watanabe II and are in condition for allowance.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and earnestly solicit reconsideration of same.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY 

Thomas C. Basso
Reg. No. 46,541
Customer No. 29175

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